(d) The credibility and functional efficiency would be evaluated by RITES on receipt of RFQ.

PDS ration to income tax payees

1951. SHRI RAJEEV SHUKLA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased' to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government warehouses are overflowing with cereal stocks;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to allow income-tax payees to draw ration from Public Distribution System shops;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and other alternative steps taken to dispose of the surplus stock?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The stock of foodgrains in the Central pool as on 1st January, 2002 was 580.32 lakh tonnes (rice-256.17 lakh tonnes and wheat-324.15 lakh tonnes) as against the minimum Buffer Stocking norm of 168.00 lakh tonnes of foodgrains including 84 lakh tonnes of rice and 84 lakh tonnes of wheat.

(b) to (d) Income-tax payers have not been debarred to draw ration from fair price shops under Public Distribution System (PDS). however, in order to target the PDS towards the poor, the levy sugar suply under the PDS has been restricted only to the familes living below poverty line (BPL) in all States/UTs except the North-Eastem States. Hill States and Island Territories *w.e.f* 1.2.2001.

In view of the abundant stocks of wheat and rice in the central pool, the steps taken by the Government of India to enhance food

security are as under:

(i) The entitlement for BPL familes was raised from 10kg per family per month to 20 kg per family per month from April, 2000 and further to 25 kg per family per month *w.e.f.* 12.7.2001.

(ii) In November, 2000, it was decided to make foodgrains available at CIPs applicable for BPL families for all the welfare schemes including SC/ST/OBC hostels, implemented by the various Ministries of the Government of India.

(iii) In November, 2000, a decision was taken to make foodgrains available at BPL rates for allotment to State Governments 5 kg. per head per month for covering categories of indigent people living in welfare institutions, such as beggar homes, orphanages/Nari Nikctans, etc.; sponsored by the State Governments and the concerned administrative Ministry of the Government of India.

(iv) In November, 2000, another decision was taken to make foodgrains available at BPL rates for development schemes (where the beneficiaries belong to the BPL category) implemented by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), sponsored by the State Governments and endorsed by the administrative Ministry in the Government of India, as also by international organizations like the World Food Programme.

(v) On 1.12.2000, the allocation of foodgrains for Below the Poverty Line (BPL) families was revised on the basis of populations projections of the Registrar General as on 1.3.2000. As a result, the number of BPL families eligible for subsidized foodgrains has increased from 5.96 crores families to 6.52 crore families.

(vi) The Antyodaya Anna Yojana was announced on 25.12.2000 for one crore poorest of the poor BPL families. The scheme is under implementation in all States/UTs. Each of the Antyodaya families is given @ 25 kg. of foodgrains @ Rs.2 per kg for wheat and Rs.3 per kg for rice.

(vii) In Janaury, 2001 the Food for Work Programme was introduced under which foodgrains are allocated free of cost to various States by the Ministry of Rural Development. Government of India has allocated 38.33 lakh MTs of foodgrains, from January 2001 upto 12.2.2002 for undertaking Food for Work programmes in 11 States. Government of India had allocated one lakh MTs of foodgrains for distribution in the earthquake-affected areas of Gujarat in January 2001.

(viii) In May, 2001, Government of India decided to give additional allocation of foodgrains at BPL rates to the drought affected States for distribution to all the drought affected familes (BPL & APL) @ 20 kg power family per Month for a period of three months in the current financial year,the Government of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan have already been allocated additional foodgrains. The Government of Bihar has been given additional allocation of 1.80 lakh MTs of wheat at BPL rate for flood relief.

(ix) In spite of the rise in the economic cost of wheat and rice *w.e.f.* 1.4.2001, the CIP have not been increased for the BPL category. The CIPs have been retained at Rs. 4.15 per kg. for wheat and Rs. 5.65 per for rice.

(x) The Central Issue Price (CIP) of wheat and rice for the APL category has been reduced *w.e.f.* 12.7.2001, which will be valid till 31.3.2002.

(Rs. per qunintal)

	APL
Wheat	610
Rice	830

(xi) The Ministry of Rural Development has launched the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) on 25th September, 2001 based on the announcement made by the Prime Minister on 15th August, 2001. Under the programme, it is envisaged to utilize 50 lakh MTs of foodgrains every year. The allocation of foodgrains under SGRY upto 28.2.2002 has been 30.82 lakh MTs.

(xii) The Open Market Sale Scheme of wheat was continued during the current financial year 2001-2002. The quantity sold from April, 2001 to 15.2.2002 was 37.87 lakh tonnes.

Diversion of foodgrains from TPDS

1952. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the magnitude of diversion of wheat, rice and sugar from the TPDS at the national level;

(b) the reasons therefor

(c) the steps taken by Government to control such diversion; and

(d) how far these measures have been effective in controlling diversion of foodgrains from TPDS?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) As per a survey conducted by M/s. Tata Economic Consultancy Services (TECS) in 1997, the extent of diversion at the national level has been estimated at 36% for wheat, 31% for rice and 23% for sugar. Many States while recognizing that leakages do take place, have disagreed with the pcrentage of diversion as given in the TECS report.

The study has highlighted a number of causes of diversion such as existence of bogus units, low margins given to Fair Price Shops (FPSs), abnormal storage and transit losses in handling by State agencies, irregular supply resulting in variation in entitlement, under